

## THE LANGUAGE SITUATION IN PANGANDARAN VILLAGE

Susi Yuliawati

susiyuliawati@gmail.com

Eva Tuckyta Sari Sujatna

evatuckyta@unpad.ac.id

### Abstract

*This research is a preliminary study. It describes the language situation in Pangandaran village based on five domains which are family, education, government, religion, and employment/trade. The result of the research shows that the people in Pangandaran village are a multilingual society with two dominant ethnics that are Sundanese and Javanese. The languages used are Sundanese, Javanese, Indonesian, & English. The community seems to still maintain their vernacular languages (Sundanese & Javanese). They are especially used in family and to show solidarity. Furthermore, religion domain still uses their majority vernacular language, Sundanese. Indonesian is used in formal situation such as education and trade. Pangandaran village is a tourist area, so Indonesian and English are mostly used to talk with strangers.*

**Keywords:** language situation, domain, vernacular.

### 1. Introduction

The importance of language is being acknowledged by the world. The importance arrived from the fact that there are numerous languages in the world, especially mother languages which experience linguistic shifts and at risk of going extinct. The phenomenon also happens in Indonesia. As reported in *Kompas* (14<sup>th</sup> February 2007), of the 746 mother language in Indonesia, 726 are on the verge of extinction and only thirteen of such languages are spoken by more than one million speakers. The languages are Javanese, Batak, Sundanese, Bali, Bugis, Madura, Minang, Rejang Lebong, Lampung, Makassar, Banjar, Bima, and Sasak. Moreover, several of the mother languages are spoken by less than one million or a few handful speakers, such as the language of Halmahera and Maluku.

There are several efforts to preserve mother languages done in various parts of the world. For example, UNESCO has established 21<sup>st</sup> February as International Mother Language Day. In Indonesia, the manifestation of government awareness is shown by several policies in the form of Ministerial Decree or Local Regulations aimed to preserve, train, and develop mother languages by both formal and informal ways. This is required as mother languages are part of the world heritage and local wisdom worthy to be known.

Language shift usually occurred in a bilingual or multilingual community caused by language contact. Even though not every language shift resulted in language extinction, the language situation in an area needs to be given attention as to prevent language extinction. Numerous factors are the cause of language shift, such as global culture, migration, industrialisation, economic changes, urbanization, and prestige. Language shift, in essence, shows that a language to be no longer spoken by its community of speakers. In other words, should language shift occur, members of a language community collectively prefer a new language instead of the indigenous language (local or mother language). By contrast, in language maintenance, speakers of the community collectively decide to maintain the use the current language or the language traditionally spoken. Symptoms of language shift and maintenance are observable. The use a new language in certain domains in place of the original language by speakers of a speech community signifies that language shift is taking place. The reverse holds true: if a speech community was monolingual and refuses to use another language, collectively, it is clear that the community is maintaining its language use.

Based on the above, we find it is curious to study the linguistic situation in Pangandaran, especially on possibility of language shift and maintenance as Pangandaran is home to a plural community. The community in Pangandaran is not only home to the Sundanese, but also Javanese migrants from Central Javanese, Buginese fishermen looking for new seas, and foreigners, tourists and expatriates, vacationing in the area and even marrying the locals. Each ethnic group uses their own language; the dominant languages are Sundanesenese, Javanese, Indonesian, and English.

Issues raised in this study are as follows, (1) In which domains are Sundanese, Javanese, and Indonesian used in Pangandaran? and (2) What linguistic phenomena observed in Pangandaran hinting language shift and maintenance?

This study employs a qualitative approach. The underlying theory used is language shift and maintenance theory proposed by Fasold (1984). The study is carried out by means of data collection through direct observation, noting the context of a speech and recording it, and interview. After the data is collected, it is then transcribed and classified based on its domain. The data classified is then analysed using the theory stated above with the objective of denoting which linguistic symptoms indicate language shift or maintenance and what factors caused language shift or maintenance.

## 2. Theoretical Background

If a speech community made contact with other speech communities, language contact took place. Thus opens the possibility of linguistic change. Among the linguistic change is bilingualism. Despite the numerous definition of bilingualism, the essence of it is similar. Lado (1964: 214) in line with Bloomfield (1933) proposed that bilingualism is the native-like command of two or more languages. Based on the above definitions, it could be concluded that bilingualism is the sound ability of a person in using two languages simultaneously in his daily life.

According to Fasold (1984: 180), the first thing that came to mind when one speaks of language is language in whole. What he meant with "came to mind" is a person in a bilingual or multilingual community who speaks using two or more languages and has to choose which language to use. In choosing language, there are three possible options: 1) code-switching: using one language for use in a domain and another language within another domain; 2) code-mixing: mixing two or more languages in speech; and, 3) variation within the same language.

Fishman (1972) states that language choice analysis could be conducted by accounting for certain institutional contexts known as domain, in which displays a speaker's language tendency. Domain is regarded as a constellation of various factors including location, topic, and participant; participants may include family, neighbours, friends, transactions, bureaucracy, and education. If the context of a speech is within a family, the domain may be called a family domain. The analysis is usually related to diglossia analysis as there are formal and informal domains. In a community, the diglossia for informal domains may use low prestige language whereas in formal domains the language used is high prestige language. As such, language choice and prestige depend on the domain.

Fasold (1984: 213-214) proposes that language shift and maintenance are the result of language choice after a lengthy stretch of time. Language shift shows that a language is disused by the speech community in favour of another language. In other words, should language shift occur members of a language community collectively prefer a new language instead of the original (local or mother language). By contrast, in language maintenance, speakers of the community collectively decide to maintain the use the current language or the language traditionally spoken.

Symptoms of language shift and maintenance are observable. The use a new language in certain domains in place of the original language by speakers of a speech community signifies that language shift is taking place. The reverse holds true: if a speech community was monolingual and refuses to use another language, collectively, it is clear that the community is maintaining its language use.

Language maintenance occurs not only in a monolingual speech community, but also in bilingual and multilingual communities. Such linguistic resistance, however, only occurs if the community is diglossic. Language maintenance in such multilingual linguistic community demonstrates that the speakers use a language in certain domains and another language in other domains. It is suffice to say that in language use dynamics occurs in such communities.

There are several ways to predict language shift and maintenance. For example, language shift occurs if a community no longer has the willingness to maintain its identity as an established sociocultural group and decided to convert its identity to be part of another. It is common for an identity-maintaining community to be the larger social group than a community which converted its identity.

Yet, the above elaboration is not the only basis of predicting language shift and maintenance. The most important prediction is when a community does convert its identity. Such predictions seem impossible given current circumstances. There are several communities, under similar social and economic conditions, have preserved its language and ethnic identity and simultaneously causes other communities to shift its language and identity. If one could identify which community is in the process of converting its self-concept, the long-term language shift prediction is highly risky.

Still, at least there are certain signals which exhibit that a community is shifting its language in a given time. The tendency to maintain the difference of ‘we’ and ‘them,’ referring to the community itself and other communities around it, signals that language shift does not occur. The central concept of ‘we-them’ is language. For instance, the people of Old Order Amish in Pennsylvania maintain the use of German Pennsylvania for centuries and call their neighbouring, monolingual English-speaking communities as ‘Englishmen.’ A teacher at a seminary devised a questionnaire on language use and he stated that he used English while teaching and when speaking to ‘Englishmen.’

The stages following language shift could be scrutinized from various characteristics. First, the traditional language being replaced by a new language is considered inferior. Moreover, it is considered inferior within its language variety – spoken or written. There is also disparate word loans, in that words from the new language are freely loaned by the traditional language but not the opposite. Of course, the final stage of language shift occurred if the bilingual parents of a speech community teach their offspring only the new language.

On a more extensive note, a large scale socioeconomic situation calls for language shift, although this requirement is not binding. Speech communities living in urban, industrial, or commercial areas held the tendency to use the language spoken by a larger group living in the area. By contrast, speech communities living in geographically isolated areas or involved in farming tend to speak the minor(ity) language. Transportation and communication is associated with the new language, thus motivates shift.

A number of conditions are associated with language shift. Despite so, the basic underlying condition is bilingualism – although it is not the only reason. Yet, there are bilingual communities which stays bilingual for centuries, hence bilingualism does not guarantee language shift.

Linguists believe that, in addition to bilingualism, there are other factors which trigger language shift. The factors are, among others, migration to an area which does not speak their language or introduced to a new language there, industrialisation and economic changes, education and government policy, urbanization, prestige, a lack of population. In accordance, Holmes (2001) put forth that factors which provoked language shift are economic, social, political, demographic, behaviour, and values of a community.

3. Result and Discussion

We have collected data in the form of context and speech from areas around Pangandaran. The data is collected via interview and observation. We fully realize that the data collected and analysed is insufficient to study language dynamics of a speech community and expect to see whether the language is shifting or maintaining. We acknowledge these faults as my own. Nonetheless, this study is expected to provide an insight on the linguistic situation in Pangandaran and serve as a hypothesis for future studies.

Familial Domain

**Data 1** Language : Sundanese  
Situation : informal  
Participants : Father, Mother (25 years old), and child (3 years old)

It is found that the husband and wife of the family are from different ethnic groups. The husband is a Javanese from Purwoerto and works as a fisherman while the wife is a Sundanese from Banjar and works as a trader. Interestingly, the first language taught to the child is not bahasa Indonesia but Sundanese. The couple is multilingual. They are capable of speaking Sundanese, Javanese, and Indonesia. The couple communicates using Sundanese and Javanese.

**Data 2** Language : Sundanese  
Situation : informal  
Participants : Father (40 years old), Mother, and three children

The couple are both Sundanese. The husband is a fisherman and the wife is a housewife. The three children spoke Sundanese and communication in the family uses Sundanese. The family is capable of using Sundanese, Javanese, and Indonesia.

Governmental Domain

**Data 3** Language : Sundanese  
Location : Pangandaran village headman office  
Participants : Ogie, Head of General Affairs, Ipik (31 years old), Head of Dusun Pangandaran, and Observers

It is found that in the governmental domain, the written language for formal usage is bahasa Indonesia. Meetings are conducted using a mix of bahasa Indonesia and Sundanese. Public service is conducted using Sundanese, otherwise Javanese is used. The village bureaucrats are multilingual as they have



mastery over Javanese, Sundanese, and Indonesia. The Head of Dusun Pangandaran is capable of communicating in English as he is a part-time as a tour guide and teaches English at an English course.

#### Academic Domain

**Data 4** Location : Sekolah Dasar Negeri 4 Pangandaran foyer  
Participants : Schoolchild  
Situation : informal

Based on observation, the language used during recess is Sundanese. Topic in discussion is toys. Approached using bahasa Indonesia, the children respond in Indonesia. It is found that the academic language is bahasa Indonesia.

**Data 5** Language : Sundanese  
Location : Dried fish kiosk  
Participants : kiosk keeper, also a student at Sekolah Umum Negeri 1 Pangandaran, and  
Observers  
Situation : informal

The data is obtained by interviewing a Sekolah Umum Negeri 1 Pangandaran student. It is found that the academic language is bahasa Indonesia, except for the subject Bahasa Daerah, where the language is Sundanese. The language enjoying much usage in communication at school is Sundanese. The student only spoke Sundanese and bahasa Indonesia.

#### Commercial Domain

**Data 6** Location : Pangandaran beach  
Participants : boat lessor and customer  
Situation : informal  
Languages : Sundanese and bahasa Indonesia

##### Dialogue

Boat lessor : *"Cekap mirah anu sapuluh lokasi, mangga. Anu paket awis, setengah awis, atanapi anu mirah, mangga."*

Customer : *"Sabaraha?"*

Boat lessor : *"Anu paket keliling sapuluh lokasi tilu ratus lima puluh ayeuna dua ratus lima puluh, mangga. Mun bade ka Pasir Putih wungkul sapuluh rebu. Jadi itu udah dipesen ama tiket, Pa. Kalau kita jalan kaki tiketnya kan sebelas ribu lima ratus. Lagian kita liat taman laut yang satu meter ke bawah. Gak basah, gak. Dijamin gak basah kalau naek perahu, gak basah. Meungpeung lagi bagus."*

The boat lessor is bilingual, understanding both Sundanese and Javanese. While haggling, the boat lessor at first used Sundanese but then switched to bahasa Indonesia. The bahasa Indonesia used was informal bahasa Indonesia and code-mixed with Sundanese, as marked by the occurrence of *meungpeung* and *naek*. Code-mixing was evident in the dialogue.

**Data 7** Location : Kiosk at Pangandaran beach  
Participants : food vendor, dried fish kiosk vendor, customers  
Situation : informal  
Languages : Javanese and Sundanese

The conversation was between three dried fish vendors conducted in Javanese. When approached by a customer, the language used switched to Sundanese. The three vendors then switched to Sundanese when offering a seat to the customer. It is concluded that the participants of the conversation are bilingual. They have good command over two languages, Sundanese and Javanese. The language switching presented a linguistic phenomenon, code-switching. This is proved by switching codes if the topic, or rather, domain is changed, from friends to commercial domain.

The data served above is classified into four domains: Familial, governmental, academic, and commercial domains. The dominantly used languages in Pangandaran are bahasa Indonesia, Javanese, and Sundanese.

In formal domains, such as teaching and learning in the classroom and government bureaucratic affairs, the language used is bahasa Indonesia. The variety used is high prestige language. Low prestige bahasa Indonesia is used in informal situations, such as when a boat lessor offered his service to a potential customer.

Javanese is used by fellow Javanese in Pangandaran in informal and during commerce. Javanese is also spoken by the Sundanese.

Based on data obtained, it could be said that the language used the most in Pangandaran is Sundanese. This is demonstrated by the use of Sundanese in every domain classified above. Moreover, Sundanese is used in both formal and informal contexts.

From the data, language choice as proposed by Fasold (1984) took place. Language choice is manifested by means of:

- 1) code switching: In general, using different languages in different domains is a form of code-switching. However, code-switching may occur in within current speech events. For instance, two or more persons spoke in a language, e.g. the case of the Javanese dried fish vendors. The persons then switched to Sundanese when offering a potential customer their goods.
- 2) code-mixing: This phenomenon occurred in commercial domain (a boat lessor offered his service). The offering at first took place in Sundanese but later on switched to bahasa Indonesia mixed with several Sundanese words.

Another phenomenon in Pangandaran is diglossia. Two varieties of bahasa Indonesia, for instance, are used: high prestige for formal situations and low prestige for informal situations.

By way of language usage in Pangandaran, it is suggested that linguistic condition in Pangandaran has the tendency for language maintenance by a multilingual community rather than language shift. This suggestion may be viewed from several aspects:

- 1) as proposed by Fasold (1984), a multilingual community may maintain its languages. In Pangandaran, different languages are spoken in different domains. For instance, bahasa Indonesia is spoken in formal domains whereas Sundanese and Javanese is used in informal domains.
- 2) in the familial domain, a mother teaches her mother language to her children. In a Sundanese family, the mother language taught is Sundanese. The potent influence of Sundanese is demonstrated in a family which introduced Sundanese as the first language to the children. The mother in the family in question is Sundanese while the father is Javanese.
- 3) there are no language disparities between the early and late generations. This is due to the fact in the familial domain, the first language is the mother language.

The elaboration above evidently demonstrates the absence of language competition leading to language shift as each language is used in harmony across their appropriate domain. Consequently, multilingualism in Pangandaran is relatively stable.

#### 4. Conclusion

Taking off from the analysis and discussion, the conclusions of this study are as follows:

- 1) The community in Pangandaran is a multilingual community, having command over Sundanese, Javanese, and bahasa Indonesia. Sundanese is used in every observable domain. Bahasa Indonesia is used in formal domains and Javanese is used in familial and commercial domains.
- 2) Linguistic phenomena in Pangandaran are code-switching and code-mixing. The phenomena are the result of language choice. The linguistic condition in Pangandaran has the tendency for language maintenance rather than language shift.

It is concluded that multilingualism in Pangandaran is relatively stable as there are no interlanguage competition.

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